

Super Power

Chapter 861: Royal Princess Team

The Crystallizer civilization lessons he had received in the past were mostly the same, but this time, Han Sen noticed they were going into a lot more depth.

After the training was over, Han Sen went to a restaurant with Fat Squad Leader and his teammates.

Although they weren't in the same camp, they had to work hard in the sanctuary. Furthermore, their working locations were not the same and so, they did not meet up frequently. Gathering together in one spot was a rarity, so they were keen to take advantage of the opportunity and have a meal together.

They spoke about the many trials and tribulations they had each experienced in their lives up to that point. Fat Squad Leader recalled a tale in which he almost died while in the sanctuary. It was a story fraught with danger and arduous troubles, but he was a remarkable storyteller. He told the tale with humor and enthusiasm, which had everyone else leaning in to listen.

"Little Han, you have seen more than we, I am sure. Could you tell us a story concerning one of your adventures?" Fat Squad Leader asked, and his request was joined by nods and noises of agreement from the others there, too.

Han Sen and Fat Squad Leader had been drinking, so Han Sen told them much about what he had been through. He received a barrage of questions as he told the stories.

Han Sen wanted to embellish the tales he told, but he realized his adventures were as fantastical and as wild as a story could get. He started to acknowledge how almost ridiculous his experiences were, that further flourishes weren't even necessary.

"What a load of sh*t! A moving mountain, a tree that sunders the sky and bears fruit that craps out treasure? Where do you think you are, the Third God's Sanctuary?" As Han Sen told his stories to the keen listeners, an inappropriate comment was made from someplace behind them. The voice was mocking.

When Han Sen's story was interrupted, the listeners all turned their heads to see who had the gall to do so. They were prohibited from wearing military uniforms outside the camp, so they wondered if the outspoken person only said as much because he didn't know who they were.

"Friend, we were only exchanging tales. You interrupt us as if you have been offended." Fat Squad Leader stood up and spoke to the person who had interrupted them, and noticed he was standing in the presence of others, too.

“This is a public area and there is a little thing called free speech. What? Are you guys allowed to spout whatever nonsense you want, whereas I must remain quiet?” the man said with a smile.

Fat Squad Leader looked ready to respond, but Li Jin tugged at his arm. Li Jin had recognized who those people were, and so he told Fat Squad Leader, “Leader, they are from the Royal Warframe Team. I saw them while we were training.”

Fat Squad Leader frowned and said, “If we are allied, then I can excuse your bullish intrusion. At the very least, I hope that you can be a touch more respectful going forward.”

Fat Squad leader sat back down, but the man raised his eyebrows and retorted, “Oh, I apologize. But our Royal Warframe Team is not comprised of bullsh*tters.”

At this, Han Sen and Fat Squad Leader furrowed their brows. “Dude, you’re way over the line!”

“Oh, I apologize again. Did I touch a nerve? That’s fine; I’m sure that Hero Han can kill all manner of wretched creatures and surmount insurmountable challenges. Do not worry for my talent, as I am not a person that can move mountains and bring down the sky. I am merely a surpasser that has just reached the Third God’s Sanctuary. Haha. I suppose he could fight me, if he figured he was strong enough.” The man was unbearably cocky.

When Han Sen heard the man refer to him as Hero Han, he knew right away that the sole purpose for the man’s intrusion here was to cause trouble.

“Do you have no shame? You are a surpasser, who has come to challenge and pick on evolvers?” Fat Squad Leader was aggravated.

With a mocking expression, the man said, “I may be a surpasser, but I can only suppose I am weaker than the monsters Hero Han described. If he can deal with those creatures, then I am sure he would have no problem competing against me.”

Fat Squad Leader and his friends were now riled up, but they couldn’t quite formulate an appropriate response to this. They too believed Han Sen was embellishing his tales, and exaggerating his stories for the sole purpose of entertainment. The Royal Warframe Team was mocking them, taking advantage of Han Sen’s jests. Unable to say anything, their efforts of provocation were proving effective.

“Okay. Are we to have a friendly duel or commit to a warframe fight?” Han Sen asked, after standing up and moving right in front of the man.

Han Sen was not willing to accept their bullying.

Han Sen had already taken the time to sense the surpasser’s energy flow, and he noted how he wasn’t that far off the average super creature. He was most certainly not someone special.

“Haha, are you serious? You are going to fight us, the Royal Warframe Team?” The man looked as if he had just heard the funniest joke ever devised, and he couldn’t help but burst into laughter.

The other team members joined in with the man’s amusement, and they all did their best to mock Han Sen.

The Royal Warframe Team was the greatest team in the Alliance. Only the most elite were able to join them, and they were people who were able to control warframes.

To enter the Royal Warframe Team, a person had to undergo vigorous training. The Royal Warframe Team's training regime was different than that of ordinary warframe teams. Furthermore, Han Sen was not a warframe soldier.

"I have heard of you Royal Warframe lot, and I have heard there are many warframe masters." Han Sen spoke with a cold tone of voice.

Hearing Han Sen say this, the man became awfully cocky. The Royal Warframe Team was indisputably the best of the best, and it was something they were proud of. They'd take advantage of any opportunity they could to trumpet their accomplishments.

Fat Squad Leader knew Han Sen wouldn't compliment someone like this, willy nilly, so he waited patiently for what Han Sen was going to say next.

"But I have also heard that the most powerful warframe users are female. The men are dragging the team down, apparently," Han Sen said.

Fat Squad Leader and Qiu Cheng laughed heartily at the burn. Li Jin joined in with a serious tone of voice, adding, "Yes, I have heard about this, too. The Royal Warframe Team is frequently referred to as the Royal Princess Team. I thought the team was only comprised of women. You'll have to accept my apology, for I did not know there were men amongst your ranks."

Han Sen and Li Jin's words were not false, and what they said was partly true.

The leader of the Royal Warframe Team was a woman, and most members were indeed female; like Yu Qianxun, who Han Sen had filmed s with. Wang Mengmeng was a member of their team, as well.

The primary reason for the Royal Warframe Team's reputation as an elite army was due to their appearance. Being mostly comprised of women, that was not a difficult task.

The team always showed up at the Alliance's Independence Day celebrations, the New Year festivities, and the Marching Army events. They showed up to spruce up these occasions, and it helped that all of the smaller squads inside the Royal Warframe Team were spearheaded by women, too.

With all of its authoritative figures being women, the Royal Warframe Team had been dubbed the Royal Princess Team. It wasn't a snide name, and no contempt was harbored in its usage. The nickname really was just used to illustrate the many women in its ranks.

"What did you say?" Now that Han Sen and Li Jin said this, the man's face had changed. The other men accompanying him stood up angrily.

They had been mocked for this state of affairs before, and hearing it used against them again was really quite triggering.

"Okay, let's have a warframe fight!" The men who had now been provoked looked at Han Sen with anger in their eyes.

Chapter 862: Outdated SKTS

The lounge of the restaurant had all the equipment necessary, so everyone proceeded there at once to spectate the virtual fight.

“Little Han, are you okay?” Fat Squad Leader asked, as Han Sen sat inside the hologram machine.

They had been mocked, yes; but their transgressors were from the Royal Warframe Team. They were incredibly proficient at operating warframes, and the person he was going up against was a surpasser to boot. His foe’s fitness was higher than any evolver’s, which gave him an advantage.

“I’ll be fine. I learned how to operate warframes back in military school, and I actually put some effort in when it came to practicing.” Han Sen smiled.

Fat Squad Leader then remembered that Han Sen had endorsed super biological warframes. But over the years, there had been many more generations and SK models. Those who endorsed the products had generally switched and move on with the later releases.

But Han Sen’s first-generation SKTS was undoubtedly the most famous. The advert and the SKTS itself were widely regarded as classics.

Of course, the adverts weren’t representative of their actual operational functions. What he had learnt had been in school, so it was natural for people to be dubious over whether or not Han Sen could actually compete with professionals in today’s scene.

But it was too late now, and Han Sen’s crew could only hope for the best. Their embarrassment would be even greater, if he lost.

The Royal Warframe Team bunch, however, were acting as if they had already secured victory. For this fight, they even got the restaurant workers to stream the fight live on the TVs of the restaurant.

People who visited this establishment were mostly soldiers, those that had come here training. As such, this was a fight that was sure to interest them.

“Oh, it’s a Royal Knight! Wasn’t that person ranked seventh in the realm of evolver’s warframe combat. It has been a long time since I last saw him.”

“It really is him! It’s Li Chengxian from the Royal Warframe Team. He’s a surpasser now, so it is fairly obvious why you don’t see him much, anymore.”

“Cool! Who is he going up against?”

“Some fellow with a strange ID. I’ve never heard of him before.”

“It is a guest account.”

.....

Han Sen logged-in with a guest account, and this provided him the ID of “Guest” followed by a bunch of numbers.

Having received the invitation to battle from Li Chengxian, he entered the combat arena. Instantly, the countdown began.

An old man sat down in the restaurant as the countdown started, and he watched the screen of the TV intently. He couldn’t wait for the match to begin.

Zhuo Donglai came here to chat with Han Sen, but did not expect him to have gotten into a fight with Li Chengxian. He found the prospects of their battle quite interesting.

“Soldiers from the Royal Warframe Team are very good when it comes to the operation of warframes. They have much experience and constantly make use of them. Han Sen most likely hasn’t touched a warframe in many years, so I wonder what he’s going to do?” Zhuo Donglai sipped on a glass of wine, deep in thought.

It had indeed been a long time since Han Sen operated a warframe, and he wasn’t familiar with what models were currently being used. He chose SKTS due to his familiarity with it, but it was incredibly outdated by that point.

Seeing Han Sen select the SKTS, Li Chengxian coldly smiled. The SKTS was a regular warframe, outdated and lacking high mobility. Its weapons were unremarkable, and it lacked a variety of them. It was generally considered unsuitable for battles against other warframes.

Han Sen chose this warframe due to being familiar with it.

Li Chengxian wasn’t going to be polite or go easy on Han Sen, though. He was ready to whip him like a dog and teach him a stern lesson. Han Sen had mocked the males of their team, so to assert the victory he wanted, Li Chengxian chose the best warframe possible. It was a super biological warframe called “King of War.”

King of War was the latest model, and it was five generations ahead of the SKTS. Although this King of War was only a regular variant instead of the military variant—which reduced the weapons it possessed—it was fairly close.

Every man loved mechs, and in this age, super biological warframes in particular. Whereas in the past, men might have been car enthusiasts and later spaceship lovers, this was the latest manly interest. Even if a man wasn’t crazy about machinery, they’d still appreciate them.

Warframe matches were a popular sport to watch, and especially so when a match included a member of the Royal Warframe Team.

Even men and soldiers who weren’t warframe operators enjoyed watching the fights, and understood the intricacies of these battles.

Seeing Li Chengxian select King of War, while his opponent used an SKTS, they believed the duel was going to be some gentle sparring and not a proper fight.

But still, many people tuned in to watch, due to one of the fighters being associated with the Royal Warframe Team. It made for great entertainment to accompany their meals.

When the countdown ended, King of War and SKTS appeared in the arena. It was a plain battleground, and it lacked barriers. There, they would simply fight.

Han Sen's SKTS had a sword and a laser blaster, nothing else.

King of War was decked out with a variety of weapons, like a giant, mobile arsenal.

Li Chengxian looked at Han Sen's basic, raw SKTS and cackled. When he moved his hand, King of War came to life with thirteen cannons immediately aiming for Han Sen. He'd blast the SKTS to kingdom come before it even took a step towards him.

"D*mn! Thirteen weapons all at once, that's pretty powerful. And talented! These Royal Knights really are a crazy lot. Awesome!"

"His abilities of warframe operation are way too good. He moves the robot with an unmatched mixture of both speed and precision. This is nuts!"

"The Royal Warframe Team really is no joke."

"Oh, that poor soul. That guy in the SKTS will be nothing but scrap metal before he takes his second step."

.....

When the SKTS moved, however, everyone was shocked. It was an ordinary movement, but it made people feel as if the SKTS was alive.

At that moment, they noticed a fluidity unlike anything they thought a machine could perform. It was like the SKTS had melded with the agility of a human.

The movements of the SKTS were delicate, and each step exuded a sense of real soul. It was difficult for people to describe what they were watching.

"Those quick movements... by the sanctuaries! Who is controlling that SKTS? That's insane!"

Amidst everyone's shock, the SKTS continued its graceful dance forward. The trail it took was strange, and when the cannons fired, every shot missed and hit the ground around it.

The SKTS was like a silver phantom.

Chapter 863: Alpha Control

Fortunately, warframe fights were not determined by simple speed. There were many contributing factors that lead to victory; if much of the fight had relied on speed, Han Sen would never have been able to catch up to King of War.

King of War was very powerful. It had a very high defense, and it possessed many different weapons. This meant its size was less than an ideal; it was big, and as a result, clumsy and a little stiff to move. This was where the SKTS could prove itself.

The SKTS was far lighter and its agility was high.

With Han Sen's incredible eighth sense, Han Sen was able to predict King of War's movements and adapt accordingly.

Using Heavenly Go, Han Sen took on a formation. He prompted King of War to fire first, giving him the opportunity to start his dance of evasion. With the SKTS, Han Sen was able to make his way over to King of War while it was preoccupied.

"Is this fight staged?"

"Ha! This is way too fake. How can King of War not manage to strike that old SKTS, when its headed straight his way."

"Haha! I give this crappy display a one-out-of-ten rating. Their performance is terrible, and it beggars belief. King of War fires continuously, and I'm expected to believe the SKTS can dodge such a barrage without a scratch?"

"How much did SKTS pay for this shameless, laughable display? I'll pay double just to make it stop!"

"It may be just a show, but SKTS's power is nothing to laugh at. That being said, the agility is difficult to believe. Performing a single dodge is hard enough, but to keep on doing so is too good to be true. The fitness level of whoever is inside that SKTS must be rather lofty."

"This performance is interesting. I wonder who is in control of the SKTS?"

"This isn't a show, numbnuts! This is the real deal. I saw how this fight got started, over in the lobby. Li Chengxian started picking on Han Sen and his fellows, so he offered to duel him with a warframe."

"Holy smokes! Is that true?"

"Why would I lie? There were quite a few people there. The tension between the two was stoked like a fire."

"This is crazy. Han Sen is the one operating SKTS? Are his abilities really that good? He's not even a warframe operator."

“Don’t you recall when SKTS first entered the market? Han Sen was the one who starred in its advert, when he was still in military school.”

“I remember Digang having just created super biological warframes. When SKTS first came out, it was massive. The advert’s focus was on the warframe and Yu Qianxun, I didn’t notice the young man in it.”

“He was SKTS’s Alpha Operator. It’s no wonder he is so strong.”

.....

The arena for their battle was very small. With a firm handle on the SKTS, Han Sen effortlessly made his way over to King of War.

When in range, however, Han Sen did not attack right away. The difference between their armor statistics meant Han Sen could not fight him face-to-face.

Therefore, Han Sen used his SKTS to go around and around King of War. Instead of just dodging in one direction, he ran circles around King of War. With his sword, he kept slashing as he went, waiting for the perfect opening in which he could use his laser blaster.

King of War kept spinning, and it almost seemed stuck in its attempt to locate the SKTS. It couldn’t even attack.

“Are you sure this isn’t a show? It seems fake. Why isn’t he fighting back?” someone asked.

“Oh, he wants to fight back. The thing is, he can’t,” an old warframe soldier said, as he looked at the SKTS. Despite his affirmation, he was still surprised at what he was seeing.

“Brother Xu, what do you mean by that? How can he not fight back?” Everyone turned to look at the old soldier, in anticipation of an explanation.

The soldier looked at the video and said, “King of War has many native, built-in weapons, as well as weapons that are external attachments. It may seem powerful, but too many weapons make you bulky, and accuracy comes at the cost of time.”

“The SKTS manages to always place itself inside King of War’s aiming deadzone. By the time King of War adjusts his position, the SKTS has already moved to another deadzone. King of War will never be able to lock onto him, provided the SKTS keeps this up. So, how can he possibly fight back?”

Hearing this explanation, everyone watched the screen with a clearer concept of what was going on. When they saw King of War’s gun move, the SKTS had moved. It really was impossible for King of War to lock-on to his opponent.

“His control is too much. It’s like a bug, forever hiding in the enemy’s deadzone. He is too good.”

“It is no wonder why he is the fiance of the princess.”

“It isn’t that SKTS has been updated, it’s just down to the driver. There is a reason why Digang invited Han Sen to film the advert. Han Sen did indeed know everything about the SKTS, and he was indeed like an alpha.”

“Are you recording this video?”

“No, but you can just ask for a copy off the restaurant later.”

“An Alpha Operator of the SKTS is something that’s well worth watching.”

Everyone was exuberantly happy, watching this fight unfold. The only one not having a good time was Li Chengxian. Try as he might, he could not lock onto the SKTS. Everything he tried to do was thwarted, as if the SKTS had the ability of foresight.

It was like someone had installed a window into his soul, and there his opponent was, peering right through it. It even frightened him a bit. Although this was all virtual, he couldn’t help but imagine Han Sen’s face grinning like a devil. This vision made his skin itch.

Li Chengxian no longer expected victory. More than anything, he wanted to lose right now and bring an end to the nightmare.

He would have vastly preferred it if the SKTS had the strength to immediately blow up the King of War. But the SKTS’s weapons were too weak, and the King of War’s armor was too sturdy.

It was a bad combination, and all the SKTS could do was slowly whittle away the defense and health of King of War. It would still be a while before the horror was over and King of War would be destroyed.

A fight like this was not unlike torture, and it made Li Chengxian feel a phantom pain.

If the Royal Warframe Team’s honor wasn’t at stake, he would have happily thrown in the towel.

It had been a very long time since Han Sen last touched a warframe, and he recalled the times he would occasionally hop in one for some fun. Moving at high speed, with a sword that did not stop swinging and the laser blaster that kept on firing, it was an orgy of sounds. The pinging of laser on metal was particularly delightful for the ears of men, and it made them super excited.

Chapter 864: One Mouth and a Demigod

Zhuo Donglai watched the screen with an excitement in his heart. It reminded him of himself, in the days of his youth.

“He is not from the Luo family, and he did not practice Falsified-Sky Sutra. This is interesting, and now I have come to the decision that yes, I will recruit him as my student.” Zhuo Donglai smiled.

It was difficult to believe that a Luo family member hadn’t learned the Falsified-Sky Sutra but had still become so powerful.

His skills were top-tier. They weren’t associated with movement and power, and from what he had seen of Han Sen’s operation of a warframe, Zhuo Donglai learnt a lot.

“It is an interesting thing, for him to become so powerful without learning the Falsified-Sky Sutra.” Zhuo Donglai had a few extra thoughts about this, but he did not dwell on them. His mind swiftly moved on to think, “He is not from the Luo family, and neither does he want to be. His name is Han. Haha! I can’t wait to see what comes of this.”

Boom!

Only God could have kept count of the hundreds of slashes the SKTS delivered to King of War, but it finally broke. And with King of War's breaking, the fight came to an end.

Li Chengxian did not say a word following his defeat. Upon his exit, he quickly summoned for his men to depart alongside him. He was far too ashamed of his performance to muster a single word, since he was a Royal Warframe Team operator who had just lost to an old, outdated SKTS.

Footage of the fight had been uploaded to Skynet. The full-length video was titled SKTS Murders King of War, and it didn't take long for it go viral.

After watching the video, many people were flabbergasted. Many warframe lovers wondered if they had what it took to do as the SKTS did.

Those efforts turned out badly, however. A few days after the video was uploaded, there were reports of countless SKTS kits being destroyed and their operators injured. No one was able to replicate what they had seen in the video.

As a result, many people believed the video had been faked, and its fight was staged. But when people thought about the fact that the video included Han Sen and a member of the Royal Warframe Team, they questioned why those two would do such a thing. Them faking a battle did not seem likely.

For the Royal Warframe Team to suffer such a defeat was humiliating, and many people could not help but say, "There is an operator called The Alpha. Others can't do what he does, and the skills he knows are etched into his bones."

Han Sen, Fat Squad Leader, and his friends celebrated the victory together. Delighted over the result, they all decided to get wasted. Later that night, Han Sen wobbled his way to the bathroom.

When he was in front of the door, an old man walked out. Han Sen was so drunk, he didn't even look at him properly.

This was the Alliance. Unlike in the sanctuaries, you always had to be alert—even in a drunken stupor.

So, when Han Sen passed the old man, he felt as if the old man's eyes were incredibly bright. He glanced towards them.

As he looked, Han Sen froze. His pupils went smaller and his eyes were sapped of the joy they once possessed.

"Kid, take my mind test. If you pass, I will allow you to be my student," Zhuo Donglai cockily said.

As a demigod, Zhuo Donglai was incredibly talented in the realm of influencing the wills of others and performing illusions. In demigod fights, he was able to make others lose their attention and fall into a false reality that he had devised.

Han Sen was merely an evolver, and helpless to resist. Therefore, Zhuo Donglai wished to test Han Sen's willpower, faith, and resolve. If he passed, he would be sufficiently qualified to be Zhuo Donglai's apprentice. If his faith was warped, then that meant he did not have what it took yet.

People could learn any skill they wanted, and they could become as powerful as they wanted, too. The only inhibitor to achieving such lofty goals was a person's faith and dedication to the cause.

Zhuo Donglai walked in front of Han Sen and brought him to sit down. Han Sen's attention was vacant now, for he had been placed in Zhuo Donglai's Infinite Mind Trial. For surpassers, it traditionally took them an hour to escape it.

"Kid, suffer a little. When you come out, you will obey me." Zhuo Donglai thought about how Han Sen might respect him following the trial, and smiled with jittery excitement.

Zhuo Donglai placed a hand on Han Sen's shoulder, and when he did, Han Sen burped. Following that, a wretched noise sounded. "Blergh!" Han Sen threw up all over Zhuo Donglai.

Zhuo Donglai was caught at unawares. On any other occasion, he'd dodge without trouble, but he had become too self-obsessed, and his excitement over Han Sen had gotten the best of him. While thinking about how incredible his Infinite Mind Trial was, and how he'd present himself as Han Sen's new boss, the projectile vomiting caught him off-guard.

Han Sen was very drunk at this point. Becoming dizzy under the influence of Infinite Mind Trial was the straw that broke the camel's back and opened the floodgates of his stomach.

The two looked at each other for a second, and after acknowledging the situation, Han Sen said, "I am so sorry!"

"It's okay." Zhuo Donglai lowered his head and left, not wanting Han Sen to see his face.

He didn't look like the strong man that he was right now, especially since he was covered in puke. If he told Han Sen he was a demigod and wished to recruit him as a student, Han Sen was sure to believe he was an old man who had escaped the loony bin.

"D*mn it! Why did he not get lost in my Infinite Mind Trial? This is crazy." Zhuo Donglai was shocked.

"It fortunate that guy was a pleasant person. If he wasn't, I would sure be in trouble. I should avoid throwing up on people in the future, I think." Han Sen, merry as a cricket, continued his wobble towards the bathroom.

Zhuo Donglai, on the other hand, quickly left Moka Planet. Although he wanted to spend more time with Han Sen, it'd be awkward if he was recognized after their drunken encounter.

Therefore, Zhuo Donglai thought he might wait a while longer. He'd change his hairstyle and shave his beard, so by the next time they met, Han Sen would be none the wiser.

Han Sen was so drunk, he'd never believe he had thrown up on a demigod.

The training on Moka Planet lasted half a month, in total. When it was over, nothing came of it all. There were no adventures or excursions planned for them inside the ruins or anything. It had been a long time Daphne received a mission.

So, following this, Han Sen decided to return to the sanctuary. Wang Yuhang was still in Moment Shelter, so Han Sen traveled to Devil-Blood Shelter in his company. They wanted to see if they could deal one final strike and destroy the shelter.

The Devil-Blood King had mostly lost everything, so Han Sen was willing to assume all of the super creatures he had brought with him for the golden chests had been killed. At the most, only seven now remained. And if there were, Han Sen believed he could beat them.

His confidence had grown because he now owned the Silver-Blood Macaque.

Chapter 865: Attacking Devil-Blood Shelter

Silver-Blood Macaque: Shapeshifting Beast Soul

Han Sen had finally received a new shapeshifting beast soul. With these buffs, Han Sen could definitely go up against super creatures, and perhaps things that were even stronger.

Although he couldn't allow Moment Queen to help him out anymore, fearing she might try something else or even self-destruct, the Silver-Blood Macaque would make up for her absence in battle.

Death Knell and Spirit Owl had also finished evolving by now, becoming super pets that could fight. His team would be stronger than ever.

Han Sen now had Little Angel, Death Knell, Spirit Owl, Little Silver, Little Fairy, and Wang Yuhang. With such a team, Han Sen believed it was possible to take down Devil-Blood Shelter.

Big Black, Small Black, and Little White stayed behind to defend Moment Shelter while they were gone.

Without delay, Han Sen brought Wang Yuhang right to the front gate of Devil-Blood Shelter. On this day, they weren't going to spend time trying to lure some of the residents away.

Spirit Owl flew high in the air and summoned an army of rats to assault the shelter. Each rat was sacred-blood in strength, and they ran in like a vermintide for boorish reconnaissance.

And just as Han Sen had deduced, the Devil-Blood King only had six super creatures left in his company. Han Sen and Wang Yuhang entered the shelter with the goal of killing the super creatures, first and foremost. They weren't going to take out the spirit and his spirit stone just yet.

The silver fox and Little Fairy were loosed, while Spirit Owl and Little Angel each picked themselves a target.

Han Sen caught sight of a wolf-like super creature. Han Sen's eyes gleamed with silver, and when they did, Han Sen transformed into a three-meter-tall silver ape. Holding his Flaming Rex Spike, Han Sen spared no time in swinging it down on the wolf's head.

Boom!

The super creature collapsed on the ground after Han Sen's attack. In one swing, its head had been smashed in. The skull had been skinned and half-shattered, exposing a bleeding brain on the inside.

The increase in power Han Sen had received was incredible to behold, and the thrill of unleashing it almost made him scream to the sky in delight. He picked up the Flaming Rex Spike in one hand, and the fallen super creature in the other. He tossed the super creature into the air and, while it was airborne, used his rex spike to beat it repeatedly. The wolf had no chance to fight back against such brutality.

Another super creature then went to fight Han Sen. In response to this, Han Sen pointed his finger and summoned Death Knell. The blue bell became a big bell, and with its bottom like a hungry maw, it set itself down upon the incoming creature. The super creature was then trapped beneath the bell like a spider in a glass.

From inside the bell, the clapper went wild. Amidst the tolls and scraping of nails against its hard interior, the super creature was going mad in its bid to escape. Alas, there was nothing it could do.

Han Sen was no longer affected by the noise, but it did disturb the wolf creature. Grabbing the lifeless body of the wolf by its wretched wounds, he pulled the wolf apart with his massive simian arms.

"Super Creature Tiger-Wolf Beast killed. No beast soul gained. The flesh of this creature is inedible, but you may harvest its Life Geno Essence. Consume its Life Geno Essence to obtain zero to ten super geno points randomly."

The Devil-Blood King suddenly popped up from Han Sen's shadow. He tried to strike at Han Sen's back with his claw-like fingernails, but Han Sen was ready. He fought back with Sonic-Thunder Punch, and when his fist collided with the Devil-Blood King, the silver sunlight went supernova. The strike against the Devil-Blood King's talons was tremendous, and it sent the spirit spiralling backwards.

Han Sen was overjoyed at this result, and without reprieve, moved in to perform the same skill again. And then he did it again and again and again without pause. The shelter was washed with a blinding white light from the repeated explosions of Han Sen's silver suns. The shadows all around were either dispersed or made faint, prohibiting the Devil-Blood King from melding into them to travel and escape.

With the vitality boost given to him by the Silver-Blood Macaque, Sonic-Thunder Punch no longer drained his energy as it used to. Without getting weak, he could continue swinging his fist as a Sonic-Thunder Punch without delay, over and over like any average punch. The Devil-Blood King could do little but try to fall back, as lightning crackled and sparked all across him.

Boom!

Han Sen punched his face, and when he did, the Devil-Blood King was thrown into the air. Then he punched his belly, and the Devil-Blood King was sent flying away a few hundred meters, striking the gate wall and making it crumble.

Blood spilled from the Devil-Blood King, and he turned black as charcoal with the lasting electricity.

Ignoring him for now, Han Sen turned his attention elsewhere. He saw the silver fox in a fight of its own, and it had managed to paralyze its opponent. Running over there to help out, he brought down a Sonic-Thunder Punch on the stunned creature's head.

Silver sunlight blasted out of every orifice of the super creature, and a little later, its belly exploded from the heat. Lightning and blood were everywhere, and a second later, it was pronounced dead.

"Super Creature Muscle Beast killed. No beast soul gained. The flesh of this creature is inedible, but you may harvest its Life Geno Essence. Consume its Life Geno Essence to obtain zero to ten super geno points randomly."

Han Sen felt pretty awesome at this point. The raging silver ape body he now possessed moved fast, and he had managed to effortlessly beat back the Devil-Blood King and slay super creatures.

Han Sen hadn't had a good, easy fight like this in a while. Wang Yuhang, on the other hand, wasn't sure how to compose his thoughts. He was frozen by what he saw. When they first came to this place, Han Sen valued his help and needed it a good deal, especially with pulling creatures away. But now, in a short amount of time, Han Sen had reached a point where he was the one chasing the super creatures.

"This is sickening," Wang Yuhang thought to himself, unable to believe there was nothing he could do to help right now.

The six super creatures were soon killed. Two of them were second-generations, but none of them provided beast souls. That might have been a consequence of Wang Yuhang's presence, however.

The Devil-Blood King screamed as he suffered one last hack from Little Angel's greatsword. When she brought down her sword that one last time, it hewed the head off Devil-Blood King's shoulders and sent him back to his spirit stone.

"Go and look for the Spirit Hall," Han Sen told the Spirit Owl.

Spirit Owl made a noise not unlike a baby. And from below the Spirit Owl, a legion of rats followed and spread out like a tide in search of the hall. Within ten minutes, they had found it.

It was through a small hole, hidden inside a palace. When Han Sen reached the hall, he saw something strange on the spirit stone. He promptly bent to pick it up.

The spirit stone shone black and red, and then blew up in Han Sen's hand into nothing but dust.

"I failed." Han Sen had a wry smile, for this was the first time he ever failed capturing a spirit.

Still, he was now in possession of Devil-Blood Shelter. It was a decent reward, and when factoring in the two second-generation Life Geno Essences he had also obtained, he felt satisfied.

The two essences gave him fourteen super geno points, bringing his total up to ninety-two. He was only one step away from maxing it out.

Han Sen gave a thunder-element Life Geno Essence to the silver fox, and it was happy. The same could not be said for the fairy, however. There were no water-element Life Geno Essences to be obtained, and she was a little grumpy in her disappointment.

Chapter 866: New Shura King

After taking over Devil-Blood Shelter, Han Sen was starting to think he was far more powerful than he should've been. He had two King-class shelters and yet, there'd never be anyone around to occupy them. Ferocious monsters ruled the lands that encompassed the shelters, meaning human occupation was unlikely. This annoyed Han Sen.

Despite owning these two shelters, he realized his inability to earn a single penny from either.

Although Han Sen did not need money, not earning anything from such potentially prosperous shelters was aggravating.

Han Sen told Wang Yuhang about how he was feeling. His response, upon hearing Han Sen's lamentations was, "Why would you allow this to dwell on your mind? With the advent of Angel Gene Fluid, the growing strength of humanity is accelerating. If you can secure these shelters and provide protection to other bold, pioneering sorts, it'd be a valuable location. Particularly so, with all the terrifying monsters that roam here. This place would be valued highly, I am sure. Even if you did not want to sell it, you could simply rent it."

"I guess you're right. I would only need Big Black and Small Black to guard this place, after all. There are no other King-class shelters around, so they would suffice." Han Sen then turned his thoughts to which way he might earn the most money.

Wang Yuhang gave Han Sen a few more ideas, which Han Sen received favorably.

After going back to the Alliance, Han Sen found someone to produce an for him, to rent out Devil-Blood Shelter.

The shocked the whole Alliance. The fact that Han Sen had taken down a super spirit shelter was nigh unbelievable.

Taking down a King-class shelter was in a whole different league than simply slaying a super creature. While Angel Gene was rejoicing about their felling of a single super creature, Han Sen was unceremoniously conducting business after securing an entire King-class shelter.

Many people enquired about the , following its posting. Many people asked about the price, in particular.

After learning its location, many of the bigger organizations were keen to scout the area and check it out.

The results added further shock. If the shelter was indeed secure, then it would be a bountiful location with an abundance of resources. Not to mention the plentiful super creatures.

The only problem would have been safety, but Han Sen pledged there would be two super creatures remaining there, willing to guard the location. Thinking the shelter to be viable, many different factions gave Han Sen the sum they were willing to pay.

Angel Gene was the highest bidder, but Han Sen decided to rent it out to Dong Lin instead. With the contract that was written-up and later signed, they would pay Han Sen with a large sum of pet pills every year.

After the first transaction, Han Sen returned to Moment Shelter with a large quantity of pet pills. Then, he bid for Big Black and Small Black to go to Devil-Blood Shelter and guard it.

He had received many pet pills, and not being stingy, Han Sen happily handed them out to the silver fox and his beast souls. Even Meowth and Golden Growler could consume them.

Pet pills were very beneficial for super creatures. The silver fox, the fairy, Big Black, Small Black, and Little White loved them. Before long, the pills dwindled quickly.

Han Sen could visibly see the changes, however. As a result, he did not feel bad about spending them as freely as he did.

Han Sen calculated that the pet pills Dong Lin would pay every year was enough to keep them each reasonably fed for the duration between payments.

When Han Sen went to the Third God's Sanctuary, he would have to leave his companions behind. Han Sen wanted to feed and treat them well in the hopes they could ascend with him, like the Holy Rhino or Empty Witch had. If he could secure their ascendance, perhaps they could meet each other again.

Han Sen was going to be levelling up soon, so before that happened, Han Sen decided to pay his mother a visit.

When he asked his mom why she hadn't gone to the Third God's Sanctuary, she said it wasn't worth the risk. But if she had wanted to go, she'd have been there a long time ago.

She was afraid she'd have bad luck and die, with no hope of survival upon ascending. If that happened, there'd be no one left to look after Han Sen and Han Yan, she reasoned.

Han Sen was an independent person, yes, but Han Yan needed to be looked after. That was the reason, for now, for not going to the Third God's Sanctuary.

When Han Sen visited his mom, he was planning to give her super beast souls and Life Geno Essences. She could either use them herself or give them to Han Yan when she reached the Second God's Sanctuary. He didn't plan on selling them, anyway.

On his way to Blue Crystal Shelter, he also planned on maxing out his super geno points along the way. With some decent luck, he could find and provide the silver fox with a thunder-element Life Geno Essence, too.

It would have been nice if he could help the fairy, as well. But he wagered that, with the Crystal Palace, he could scour the seas and find a water-element Life Geno Essence with greater ease some other time.

Although Han Sen still had two-hundred-thousand miles to go, the road wasn't going to be a dangerous one due to how strong he had become. Therefore, Han Sen considered it as little more than a road trip. To join him, he decided to bring Zero and all his beautiful spirits with him on his way to Blue Crystal Shelter.

After walking for an entire month, they were yet to encounter a single dangerous moment. With his gorgeous companions and stunning views, it was a fun time. He even managed to get a thunder-element Life Geno Essence for the silver fox.

But Han Sen still hadn't been able to find a second-generation super creature for himself, which was rather disappointing.

He visited a human shelter along the way and returned to the Alliance for a spell. There, he heard startling news.

The shura had decided upon a new king. Or rather, this time, a queen. Her name was Yu Shura Queen, like Yu Qielan from the Yu family.

"I can't believe Yu Shura Queen was able to claim the throne. It's bad news for humanity, that's for sure," Ji Yanran said.

"Why?" Han Sen asked.

Ji Yanran explained, "The Yu family focuses on technological advancements. They are also fairly open-minded when it comes to other races. They consistently research how they might find a way to survive in the sanctuaries to earn geno points and own beast souls. They once suggested making use of human genes, but previous rulers were too closed-minded for that. The use of human genes would muddy their own blood, it was argued. No shura previously wanted to accept human genes, royal or otherwise. But now that she has taken the throne, that may soon change."

"Can the shura actually do that?" Han Sen frowned.

"It is difficult to tell. Angel Gene Fluid already proves it is possible to combine parts of them with ourselves. Who's to say it won't work the other way around?" Ji Yanran said.

"Well, you're right. If this does happen, that could prove troublesome," Han Sen agreed with her thoughts.

This was out of Han Sen's control, however. If the new shura leader did choose to pursue this path, it'd affect humanity a lot.

But for now, it was difficult to determine what might soon happen. For the time being, humanity had an advantage.

Chapter 867: Strange Fruit Forest

The group walked for a few more days in the sanctuary, leaving behind the lands frequently visited by humans. Before long, Han Sen and Zero found themselves standing at the eaves of a fruity forest. The trees there were about thirty to forty meters high, and their trunks were massive. Dotted among the branches of the trees were black fruits, each the size of a fist. Han Sen retrieved one and cut it open. It was fairly tough to cut through, and when the fruit opened up, it let out a stinky, nauseating smell.

After traveling another few hundred miles, they were confused to find themselves still inside the forest they thought they could soon pass through. Their minds struggled to comprehend how large and sprawling that forest must have been.

With the silver fox there, no creature disturbed or pestered their travel. But soon, Han Sen noticed that Zero was beginning to look tired. In response, he decided it was time for a rest and established a camp.

Han Sen and Zero barbecued on the open fire, just outside their pitched tents. After the moon rose, they noticed something strange occurring. The black fruit they had seen in the daytime were shining pink now. They also opened up by themselves, becoming luminous, pink-petaled flowers of some sort.

What's more, the stinky juice and smelly stench was gone. In fact, they gave off a pleasant fragrance that brought one's mind joy.

"Wow, they're so beautiful." Zero looked very surprised as she looked around the endless sea of pink flowers above.

"It is pretty." Han Sen was fairly surprised, as well. He never expected that the black fruit were hiding such lovely flowers inside.

Moment Queen, at the time, was tasked with massaging Han Sen's shoulders from behind. She frowned, and while looking at the flowers, seemed to be lost in thought over something.

A while later, fireflies appeared. They weren't the average sort, as they went around the flowers collecting nectar like bees.

What was most strange was their lack of fear towards the silver fox. Han Sen found it comforting to see how docile and unthreatening they were, however. All they did was collect what they could from the flowers, coming and going as they pleased.

Zero put out her hands and a firefly landed on it. The firefly skittered around on her skin for a bit and then took off again.

Han Sen used his dongxuan aura to get a closer look at the little critters and noticed they were just ordinary fireflies. Their shape was a little different, however, sharing something in common with a ladybug. Their whole bodies glowed, too, unlike actual fireflies.

They had lifeforces, suggesting they were real creatures and not some summoning of a hungry, demonic creature residing below ground.

Their lifeforces weren't strong, though. They were mostly ordinary, and there were only a few anomalies amongst them. A few mutants here and there were the only differences Han Sen could tell.

They did not seem aggressive, either. Even if they brushed by Han Sen's body, not one thought of attacking.

When the fireflies appeared to have collected their fill of nectar, they took off into the night sky. There were so many of them, the skies were afire like the northern lights.

The glowing flowers were beautiful, yes, but they soon got bored of the spectacle. When they were done oooing and aahing, Han Sen led Zero back to camp so they could rest. When they woke up the next morning, all the fireflies were gone and the flowers were black little cannonballs once more.

"I wonder what those plants were. They were rather strange, weren't they?" Han Sen randomly said aloud, while leading Zero back on to the road they were to traverse.

The forest was very big, and after another day of walking, they still weren't through it. When night fell, the fruit became flowers again. The fireflies returned to collect nectar just as they had the night before.

"Strange. Where do these fireflies come from? There are so many of them, there has to be nest around here somewhere. We must have walked a thousand miles, though. We've walked all this time and seen neither hide nor hair of a possible nest, so where are they during the daytime?" Han Sen thought out loud.

"Maybe they reside within the flowers themselves?" Zero suggested.

"How would that be possible?" Han Sen shook his head, dismissing her idea. He believed her mind to be too imaginative, for how could fireflies hide themselves in flowers? To confirm, he cut open another fruit, releasing another ooze of that stinky liquid he had first smelled upon arriving in the forest.

"We should continue walking on this night. If we walk until dawn, perhaps we can see where these fireflies go to rest," Han Sen said.

Zero seemed to be quite interested in this idea, and she nodded confidently.

They both kept on walking, observing the luminous flowers and busy fireflies that were all around them in every direction. Before long, they had seen so much of them, the spectacle had lost its lustre and it bored them.

When it was dawn, though, Han Sen and Zero made sure to watch the fireflies intently, and see where they'd go off to.

Surprisingly, when the sun rose, the fireflies flew into the flowers.

The flowers curled up their petals and returned to their shape as a fist-sized fruit, with fireflies in the center.

“They really are hidden in there; just as I thought,” Han Sen said, doing his best to smother his surprise.

Han Sen cut a few of the fruit open and smelled that wretched liquid. Despite a thorough dissection of the vile fruit, he was unable to locate the firefly within.

It was weird, for with his own two eyes, Han Sen had just watched one go inside.

“Strange. Could that smelly liquid be the firefly itself? If it is, then they grow inside the flowers. But what do they do with the nectar they collect then?” Han Sen wondered, in confusion.

Of course, it did not concern him too much. He continued his travel alongside Zero after the revelations, none the worse.

In the middle of that afternoon, he saw a particularly large fruit tree standing before them. It was like a hill. The black fruit grew on the tree like they did with the others, but the fruits on this tree were far bigger. They were each about one meter in width.

“Oh, this isn’t some strange fruit gala again is it? How can I keep encountering these special fruit competitions time and time again?” Han Sen thought to himself, as he approached the tree.

“Stop!” When Han Sen neared the tree, a voice called out for him to cease his approach.

Han Sen turned around and found a human woman not far away from the tree, waving towards them.

Han Sen was surprised, not expecting to see any other humans in this region. He commanded Golden Growler to run towards the woman.

“My friend, what seems to be the problem?” Han Sen said, as he started walking towards the woman. She appeared to be a typical elegant lady, in her forties at the most. Of course, considering the lifespan of humans in this age, that was young. Physically, she looked no older than twenty.

“Do not go over there. If you do, you’ll die!” The woman looked to be in distress, horrified.

Chapter 868: Dark Haunted Forest

“Die?” Han Sen looked at the woman with shock.

“Follow me.” The woman gestured for Han Sen and Zero to accompany her, then she turned around and ventured deeper into the forest.

Han Sen and Zero looked at each other, then decided to go with her. They hadn’t been walking too long when they came to a clearing with a few tents and other living amenities. There were a few other people there too, sunbathing in the pleasant afternoon sunshine.

Han Sen and Zero’s arrival roused their attention. Those who were lying down stood up, and others came out from their tents.

There were a dozen humans there, and judging from their apparel and the state of their tents, they must have been there for quite some time.

"It is lucky I found you. If I hadn't, you'd be dead right now, with no clue as to how your death had come about." Back in the camp, the woman seemed to be a touch calmer. "This place is safe, so pitch a tent and rest a while."

Han Sen looked at the woman and said, "Why? What's going on?"

"You guys know this is the Dark Haunted Forest, don't you?" she asked, with shock. The others in the camp eyed Han Sen and his fellows curiously.

Han Sen shook his head and said, "I have traveled a great distance. I didn't suspect this forest to have any form of notoriety."

"Oh, you poor and unfortunate people. Most people who wander into this forest at unawares can never find a way out." The woman let out a lamenting sigh.

"Never find a way out?" Han Sen was shocked at hearing what the woman told him. He did not believe a forest could trap him and prevent his leaving.

If he could not walk out, he could at least fly. Regardless of how creepy this place was, it would be impossible for a forest to trap a creature with wings.

"You really have no idea what you've stumbled into, do you? You both look young, and for you both to enter this place and subject yourself to this fate is a crying shame, I tell you. A crying shame!" Another person in camp had become quite outspoken.

"Can someone cut the nonsense and tell it to me straight? What is going on here?" Han Sen passed out some alcohol and food to the people, retrieved from the satchels on Golden Growler.

When the people saw the alcohol and food, they looked shocked. They ran over to the items and devoured them as quickly as they could, as if they hadn't eaten in a thousand years.

"Brother, do you have cigarettes?" a middle-aged man asked Han Sen.

"Yes, as a matter of fact. I do." Han Sen pulled out a pack of cigarettes from his pocket and tossed them over to the middle-aged man, who looked to be in absolute shock.

"You should put these away and cherish them. You're going to be here for a long time." When the woman saw how generous Han Sen was being, she couldn't help but present a wry smile.

Han Sen understood what she was implying, but he did not believe he'd be trapped in the forest as they had been. He smiled and asked for the people there to tell him all they could about the place.

The people there were harmless, and after receiving the goods from Han Sen, they passionately relayed as many of the tales and stories about the place as they could.

Like Han Sen, they had mistakenly ventured into the Dark Haunted Forest. They hadn't come together, but one at a time. Whatever venture led them to the forest had been their last, and they had all been stuck there ever since.

The woman who invited them over, near the big tree, was the most recent addition to the growing community. Her name was Liu Fang, and she had gotten lost in the forest two years before Han Sen's arrival.

Liu Fang was a botanist. Her job in the Alliance was associated with the forest, and she had a great interest in the Dark Haunted Trees that grew there.

She went there wanting to learn more about them, but walking a mere ten meters into the forest to collect a sample was enough to prevent her from leaving. She couldn't escape and suddenly, the forest stretched out for miles around in every direction. After a while of traveling, she too stumbled across this camp.

The others had a similar fate befall them. Some entered by mistake, whereas others entered the forest in pursuit of adventure. Everyone who hadn't somehow ended up dead, found themselves at this camp.

"What is so dangerous about this place? Those fireflies are harmless, aren't they?" Han Sen felt compelled to ask.

Liu Fang, with another wry smile, responded, "The Dark Haunted Forest is not aggressive in itself. The real danger comes from the Dark Haunted Trees."

"Are you saying those trees are a danger?" Han Sen eyed the trees that were all about, and didn't notice anything particularly dangerous.

"We were wondering if the trees were creatures, and the bugs were merely an extension of their bodies." Liu Fang paused after saying this, and then continued, "You probably haven't noticed this yet, but if you stay near the trees for a while, you will age much faster. In three months, you can die from old age!"

"Really?" Han Sen frowned.

"You are lucky that Little Fang brought you here. If you walk within a kilometer of that big tree, you can die in less than three hours. It's a crying shame!" the man called Wang Jiangang said.

"Thank you, if that's the case." Han Sen appreciated what she did for him. He might have been indestructible when going up against physical threats in the Second God's Sanctuary now, but there was no guarantee of survival against such creepy works.

Had he not been informed of the danger, he would have continued to blindly walk into the tree's entrapment.

"You are welcome." Liu Fang, after another wry smile, continued her dialogue. "I came here with two friends. They stayed in proximity to the Dark Haunted Tree King for one hour, and after that, they looked

to be about two hundred years old. Then, they died of old age. Just remember; do not get close to the Tree King—it'll affect your body quite quickly.”

“If it is not necessary, do not even venture beyond the outskirts of this camp. It'll be a crying shame, if you do. These ordinary trees can still affect you, it is just difficult for you to tell,” Wang Jiangang said.

“Can't I just fly away?” Han Sen asked.

“You can't. This forest is endless, and whether you try to escape by foot or by wings, you cannot leave. It's a crying shame.” Wang Jiangang smiled wryly, and continued to say, “I came to this place with beast soul wings myself. If these wings could deliver me to safety, I wouldn't still be here!”

Han Sen frowned and asked, “Have you tried cutting down the Dark Haunted Trees?”

Liu Fang answered, “You can't do that, either. If you cut them, they release a gas of some sort. It makes you grow older even faster. The camp in this meadow is the only place that is free from those wretched trees. And what's more, even if you do unearth the tree and destroy its roots, it'll magically restore itself within a few days.”

Chapter 869: Zero's Movement

“Is there no other way?” Han Sen asked, frowning.

The people had been trapped there for a very long time, some for decades. If they really had no clue, Han Sen suspected he might not be able to find a solution anytime soon, either.

Wang Jiangang said, “It's not that there is no way; in fact, we believe there might be. We are just unsure whether or not we can pull it off. 'Tis a crying shame.”

“What do you mean?” Han Sen asked.

Wang Jiangang pointed at the Tree King and said, “At night, those Dark Haunted Bugs deliver nectar to the Tree King. They feed monsters that reside within it. The monsters inside seem to have a manner of control over the bugs and trees. We believe if we can kill whatever lurks inside that wooden fiend, we'll be free to leave. But those monsters are so very strong, and with the risk of being killed through a quick aging process by venturing close, we don't believe such a thing is possible. None of us here possess the necessary experience needed to pull such a thing off, and it's a crying shame.”

“What is the monster, exactly?” Han Sen asked, curiously.

“The Dark Haunted Tree King is different than the other trees. Those fruits do not birth bugs; they release bat-like creatures. Sometimes they will consume the nectar the bugs deliver, with a speed unlike anything you've ever seen. You'd be hard-pressed catching those things on the move,” Liu Fang chimed in.

Han Sen spoke with them for a while and then decided to stay a while and wait to see if he could catch a glimpse of what he might be dealing with past nightfall.

That night, Han Sen planned on leaving Zero behind and going alone. But Zero wasn't having it, and she insisted on following him.

Han Sen had no choice but to accept her company, and since he was watching from afar anyway, he didn't think her presence would cause too much trouble.

The luminous flowers bloomed and the Dark Haunted Bugs filled the space beneath the canopy. Even at night, the forest was illuminated due to the light they cast. Without hesitation, Han Sen and Zero ventured towards the area where the Tree King resided.

The people in the camp had seen far too many desperate people trap themselves in bids to escape, so they didn't bother trying to stop them. Liu Fang did remind them, however, that the radius of the Tree King's effect was one kilometer.

Han Sen nodded and proceeded to where the Dark Haunted Tree King was. By following the bugs, it didn't take them long to arrive.

The Dark Haunted Tree King was like a hill, dressed in luminous flowers. The center of each open fruit had a black bat hanging from it.

Endless streams of bugs came, to and fro, delivering all their nectar into the open, luminous flowers. When they filled up, the nectar would flow and drip into the mouths of the black bats and feed them.

After hearing what Liu Fang had to say, he also paid heed to his own lifeforce. Despite what he had been told, he didn't notice anything damaging occurring to it.

Liu Fang mentioned even the ordinary trees could make a person age and absorb one's lifeforce. And regardless of how little it was, it was something Han Sen should have been able to sense.

But still, Han Sen felt nothing. And this made him frown.

He looked at the distance between him and the tree, and noticed he was standing exactly one kilometer away from the Tree King. Han Sen made Zero wait there, while he approached.

But again, Zero wasn't willing to be left behind. When Han Sen took a step forward, so did she. Han Sen had no choice but to accept her insistence of accompanying him, and allow her to come. She was a much happier girl these days, but she was still as stubborn as ever.

With Zero around, though, he didn't dare get too close. As he approached carefully, he calculated his distance away from the tree.

Suddenly, Han Sen felt his body's energy start to drain. He quickly pulled her back with him about ten meters, and the leak of lifeforce he had felt stopped.

"That makes no sense!" Han Sen was shocked, unable to believe his lifeforce could leak out uncontrollably as it had.

While Han Sen was lost in thought, Zero did not stop. She continued to approach the Tree King, unheeding Han Sen's concern. He shouted out to her, "Zero, what are you doing? Get back here!"

Zero did not listen and did not turn around, she continued her stroll right into the danger zone. Han Sen moved forward to grab her back.

But then, Zero's black hair turned purple and two purple horns erupted from her forehead—she was becoming a shura.

Han Sen looked at Zero, unsure why Zero was so determined to walk towards the Tree King and why she was turning into a shura.

"Zero, what are you doing? Come back!" Han Sen shouted again.

Zero ignored Han Sen's request once more, and she continued walking forward mindlessly. Her purple hair dragged along the ground, and her purple horns were glowing brightly.

Han Sen summoned his devil-eye mask to take a look at Zero, and he noticed that her lifeforce was blazing like a firestorm. For some reason, it wasn't leaking at all.

"What is this?" Han Sen was shocked. Zero wasn't losing any of her lifeforce, and this was something not even he could do.

Han Sen decided not to pull her back and he stopped calling out, since she didn't appear to be in danger. Right now, he was transfixed, curious to see what Zero was going to do.

Her powers surprised Han Sen. It had been a while since he saw Zero become a shura, and her lifeforce was like that of a super creature. It was far stronger than what she was like when she was just a human.

The bats on the flower screamed, indicating they had detected her presence. They flew out of their flowers, down towards Zero.

There were many bats, at least three hundred. Judging from their lifeforges, they were each almost at the power of a super creature, too.

Their power was comparable to that of a human who had used the shura liquid.

Han Sen's worry returned, seeing Zero continue to walk forward with so many powerful bats swooping down towards her. But in the next second, that worry became shock.

When the bats had almost reached Zero, fangs bared, she reached her hand to grab the bat leading the charge. She tore it in half, dressing the ground with its black blood.

Han Sen had never seen Zero fight so brutally, even when she was a shura. And one by one, she continued doing what she did to the first bat. She tore each in half with lightning speed, and not a single bat was able to deliver the smallest speck of damage.

The way she fought was like an animal, and anyone who saw it would most certainly be afraid.

Chapter 870: Black Coffin

The area surrounding the Dark Haunted Tree King became a shura hellscape. Zero approached the trunk of the tree, as the corpses of countless mutilated bats lay scattered across the ground. They had all been killed, and their black blood puddled on the forest floor.

The bugs flew around in the air aimlessly, not wanting to approach Zero. Even the Tree King itself shook with fear, and as it trembled, leaves cascaded to the ground and a low noise vibrated the air.

Emotionlessly, Zero resumed walking until she was standing directly in front of the tree. When she touched the rugged bark, her eyes made her look lost and confused.

Pang!

Han Sen was watching Zero in complete wonder, and then, she began to punch the tree. The bark was beaten against harshly as each fist produced a flight of wood chips and splinters.

Without reprieve, fist after fist struck the tree. After a short but copious production of wood shavings, a meter-wide hole had been punched into it.

Han Sen squinted to get a good look, and noticed that the tree was hollow on the inside.

Zero then began climbing into the hole, and when Han Sen saw this, he greatly desired to follow. But there had been no change to the area, and upon taking a few steps forward, he began to feel his lifeforce drain.

The silver fox was quick to react to this negation of energy, too. Immediately after breaching the forbidden perimeter, it squealed and leapt off Han Sen's shoulder.

Han Sen didn't immediately pull back. Instead, he tried stepping forward once more. The drain on his energy only increased, and realizing the futility of approaching, he fell back to rejoin the silver fox. He didn't want to die from a sudden old age, as the people at the camp had told him would happen.

After Zero climbed into the hole that had been beaten into the tree, Han Sen could no longer see what she was doing with his naked eyes. She had also now escaped the vision of dongxuan aura and the devil-eye mask.

Han Sen was keen and eager to see what was going on, worried for Zero's wellbeing. But where his eyes failed, his ears took over. From inside that hole he could hear the sound of more snapping wood.

The Dark Haunted Tree King continued to shiver, and the flowers that adorned its canopy seemed to be wilting. Petals and tree leaves danced to cloak the air in a thick volume.

It wasn't only the tree king that was affected, either. The whole forest seemed to be suffering the same fate, as the flowers across each tree began to suddenly wilt and their petals lost themselves to the caress of the breeze that sifted through the canopies. Despite the sordid origin of the affair, its closure was a beautiful sight.

“What happened here?” Liu Fang and Wang Jiangan came running towards Han Sen. Something big was happening, so it only seemed natural for the change to be the result of their latest arrivals to the forest. Thinking something ill might have befallen Han Sen, they quickly came over to check.

Han Sen shook his head, continuing to gaze towards the crude hole in the side of the tree king.

But suddenly, screams sounded from the tents back at camp.

“Oh, no! Something wretched must have occurred at our camp!” Liu Fang exclaimed, as she turned around and started running back.

Although Han Sen was desperate to know what was going on inside the tree, he knew there was nothing he could do from where he was standing. Thinking he could still lend a hand someplace else, Han Sen accompanied Liu Fang in her hasty return to camp.

Before the three returned, they saw two people running across the meadow with faces of abhorrent shock. They were drenched in blood, as well, but it did not come from them.

“What happened?” Wang Jiangan asked aloud.

“Ghost! There is a ghost!” The two shaken runners could only respond that, as they departed for the cover the foliage of the wood could provide.

Han Sen did not say anything, and he simply resumed his race to the camp which had now been reduced to ruin. The meadow, the sole place that hadn’t been covered in trees, was now a giant crater. Inside the pit sat a black, rectangle box. It was three meters long, and it appeared to have been constructed from wood. Upon closer inspection, Han Sen noticed it to be a six-sided box with curved shoulders.

“Is that a coffin?” Han Sen looked at the object and thought it looked reminiscent of the caskets that were used to bury humans, a long time ago.

Coffins did not exist in this day and age, and hadn’t for a very long time. You would only see coffins in either museums or ancient TV shows.

Coffins had once been objects of great superstition for people, and if you wanted to see one now, you’d have to visit a museum in the Alliance. It was shocking to see one here, in the sanctuary.

Han Sen had never heard of creatures or spirits making use of coffins before, so the existence of one there seemed to be impossible.

Even if spirits died, they’d self-destruct their spirit stone. So, why might they possess a coffin?

It’d be even stranger for a creature to own a coffin. Super creatures might have been smart, but they weren’t superstitious. They shouldn’t have even known what a coffin was.

Creatures were born in the wild, and expected to eventually die in the wild. And when their demise came about, their death usually resulted in food for the survival of others.

“Did humans bring a coffin over here and bury it?” Han Sen was shocked.

Liu Fang and Wang Jiangan looked equally shocked, now realizing they had been sleeping above a coffin all those years.

Its slumber there in the earth must have been why no trees grew above. Its existence provided them their sole meadow. It couldn't have been a coincidence, so the state of the forest had to be connected with the coffin somehow.

What was even scarier, people in the camp were bleeding in proximity to the coffin. The people that had remained there looked smaller than they used to, and their muscles appeared dry. They looked shrivelled.

Blood painted the grass in that area, and the people were nothing more than bled-out corpses.

Their bodies had no wounds, the blood seemed to drain from all of their face's orifices.

Liu Fang and Wang Jiangan continued looking at the coffin in shock. Its lid trembled and vibrated, suggesting something was about to come out of it.

Han Sen, too, stared at the coffin. But with his devil-eye mask, he could not make out the presence of a lifeforce.

Han Sen's eighth sense disturbed him.

Pang!

After a loud noise, the cover of the coffin was pushed to the side slightly. Lengthy, creepy nails and fingers felt their way out. And unlike the nails of humans today, which were trimmed and well taken care of, they were thick and unkempt. They were black and red, appearing wild. Their appearance invoked a sense of dread.

Pang!

The coffin's lid was pushed away slightly more, creating a gap big enough to invite a whole hand out from the black interior of the box.

Pat!

And suddenly, that was what occurred. A pale white hand shot out of the black, grabbing the side of the coffin with frightening vigor.